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SU 133 BC 133 including the offshore islands, has marked morainic features, such as an abundance of gravel and boulder fields, swampy, lake-filled depressions, and clayey and sand soil types. The main rivers are the short, but important Narva (Russian *Narova*) River, the outlet of Lake Peipus and a source of hydroelectric power, the Western Dvina River (Latvian *Daugava*), which also supplies water power, and the Neman River (Lithuanian *Nemunas*, Polish *Niemen*) which enters the Kurland Gulf, a shallow lagoon of the Baltic Sea.

SU 132 BC 132 The moderate continental climate is characterized by a low range between summer and winter temperatures, unlike the greater extremes which are common along the same latitude in the inland areas of the European USSR. The humid westerly winds produce a mild, damp climate, with moderate winters, cool summers, a precipitation of 20–25 inches yearly, and a high proportion of cloudy days. The poor glacial soils and the humid climate are favorable to the growth of mixed forests, where coniferous stands alternate with oak, birch, and aspen clusters, and the development of hay meadows. Except for oil shale in Estonia, peat, and construction materials (clay, sand, and limestone), the region is poor in mineral resources.

SU 137 BC 137 SU 162 BC 162 The total population of the Baltic Region is about 6 millions, of which 2.7 millions live in Lithuania, 1.8 millions in Latvia, 1 million in Estonia, and 600,000 in Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian SFSR. In addition to the titular nationalities of the three republics, the population includes the Latgals of eastern Latvia, who are related to Latvians, as well as Russians, Belorussians, Jews, Poles, and Swedes. With the exception of Lithuania, where large villages are common, the rural population lives in small hamlets of three to seven households. About one third of the population is urban and resides in small towns.

631 BC 631 The three Baltic republics, each of which represents an ethnographic unit, marked by a uniformity of language, history, and culture, were part of the Russian Empire prior to the First World War and became firmly linked with the Russian economy through trade and transportation routes. Following the Bolshevik Revolution, they separated from Russia and constituted themselves as separate independent states. In 1940, following Soviet military penetration, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were annexed to the USSR as union republics. Because of the relatively higher level of material prosperity, special consideration was given to the republics with respect to administrative organization. Instead of introducing the current administrative structure of rayon and